

## PERIODICALS

Cosmopolitan  
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"America's Women Spies"

BY DONALD ROBINSON

L. N. P.

I took a woman, of course, to help pull off the biggest espionage coup of the past decade.

No Soviet secret was ever more closely guarded than Red progress in developing the A-bomb. For years, American intelligence men tried to learn the facts, and failed. More than one disappeared, or was found with his throat cut.

Then the Central Intelligence Agency—the United States' new, world-wide espionage network—did what every smart spy organization does after its male agents flop. It assigned a woman to the task.

The woman in question is still working for us behind the Iron Curtain. The slightest clue to her identity could mean her death. All that Washington will say about her is, "She is an American girl, not unattractive, who knows her way around Europe."

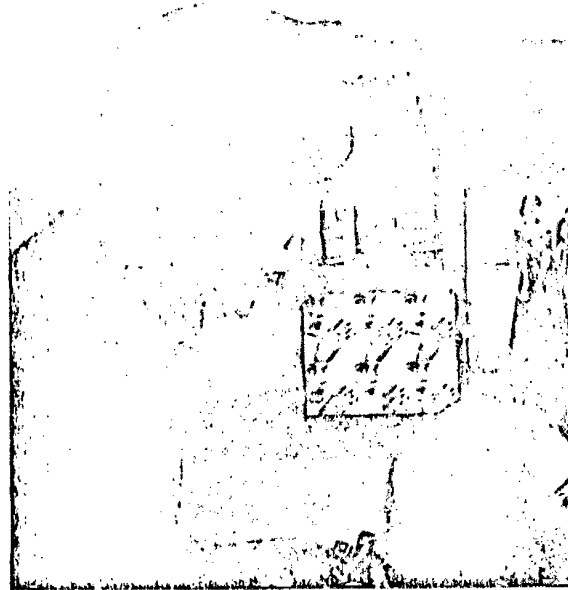
The following can be revealed, however, about the incredible job of undercover work she did: Through contacts with anti-Communist elements inside the U.S.S.R., she helped set up a pipeline into one of the most confidential offices in the entire Russian atomic project!

That pipeline, it can now be disclosed, was so effective that on the morning in July, 1949, that the Soviet completed its first A-bomb, Washington had word of it.

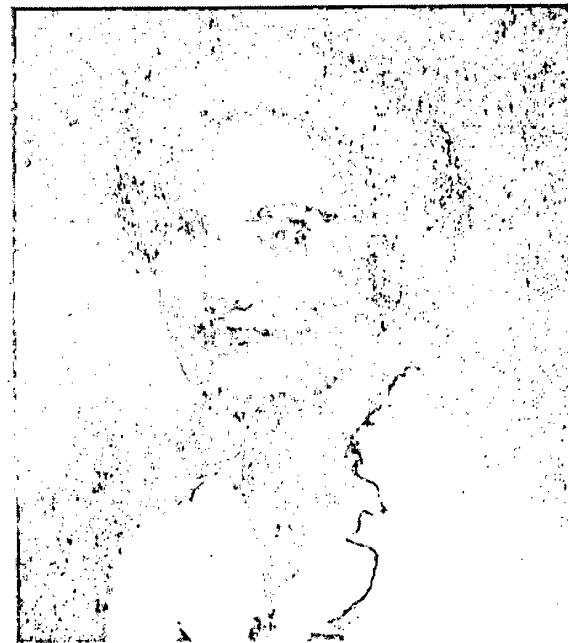
On the basis of information obtained through this pipeline, the American Government had scientists on hand in the Middle East, ready to record the radiological effects of the Red A-bomb when the Russians ran surreptitious tests of it a few weeks later.

That women excel as intelligence agents is nothing new. For five thousand years, every espionage service on earth has turned over to women the missions that have been too delicate for its men to handle. However, only within the last few years have American women had an opportunity to prove that they, too, can perform bravely and brilliantly in that perilous nether world of spy and counterspy. (The United States didn't even have an espionage organization until World War II.)

The operations of American women in the intelligence field have been shrouded in official secrecy. Their exploits from 1941 to 1945 in the fabulous Office of Strategic Services, the first international undercover organization the United States ever had, and more lately with the Central Intelligence Agency,



**MARIA MORLEY**, shown here in her peaceful pursuit of teaching Powers models how to apply make-up, guided dozens of American agents through Nazi lines in one of the most hazardous missions of World War II.



**DOROTHY HUSTON**, who died of cancer two years ago, was considered the top woman spy in the O.S.S. Although she was slim, tall, and attractive and looked very young, Mrs. Huston had three grandchildren.

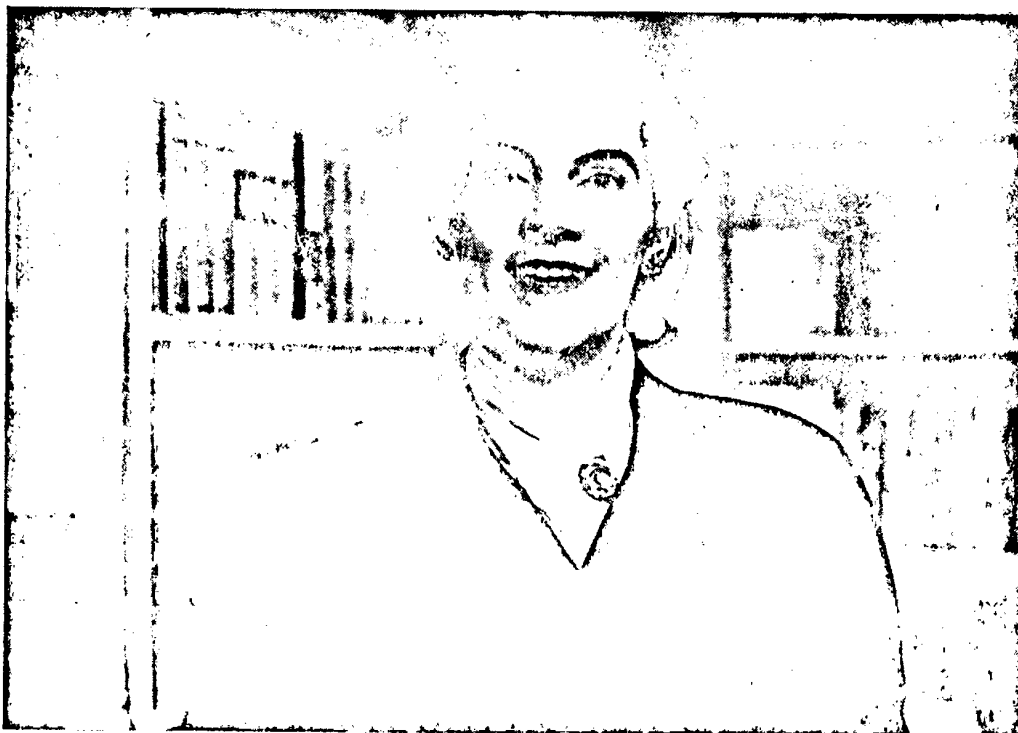
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**KAY HALLE** (whose O.S.S. nickname was "Mata Halle") did important work subverting enemy morale by the clever development of rumors and the distribution of leaflets and false information. Secret pipe lines then infiltrated this damaging material through the enemy's lines.



**MRS. EMMY RADO** interviewed the refugees who had managed to reach the United States from Occupied Europe and Africa. A pleasant, soft-spoken woman, she easily gained people's confidence and extracted valuable information her informants didn't realize they possessed.

*There was "Lillian," who danced at the Folies Bergère—and dated German officers; there was the girl whose cooking enchanted the Communists; and there were other girls who, one way or another, made men talk*

the O.S.S.'s peacetime successor, have been marked top secret. But now, for the first time, the Government has relaxed its regulations, and the activities of American women intelligence agents can at last be reported.

More than three thousand American women served in intelligence during the war. They did every conceivable kind of work, from analysis of enemy documents to sabotage and espionage. And they did it well. Alongside many of them, Mata Hari was an amateur.

Take, for instance, the alert, sharp-eyed little O.S.S. girl, just nineteen years old, who was singlehandedly responsible for knocking out a German oil refinery.

As she leafed through a schedule of freight rates on German railroads one day, she remarked to her chief, "Here's something funny. This schedule quotes rates on oil shipments to a little town in Austria that's never been listed before."

"What of it?" he asked.

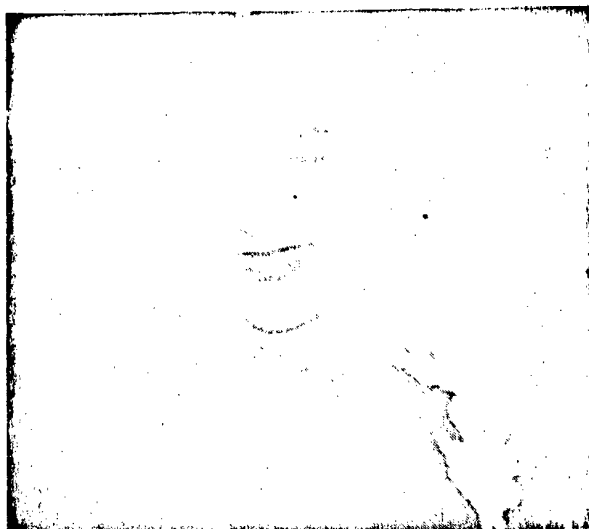
"There's no reason under the sun for anyone to ship oil to that town," she said. "I bet the Nazis have built themselves an oil refinery there."

An aerial reconnaissance was made and the girl's suspicions confirmed. A new refinery had just been erected in that tiny Austrian village. Twenty-four hours later, Eighth Air Force bombers paid it a visit.

Then there was Rachel Geise, the former Columbia University professor, who had charge of a hush-hush O.S.S. setup in Algiers. It was her task to take the reports that came in from O.S.S. agents all over Africa, Italy, and France and piece them together into a complete, well-integrated intelligence picture. If anything was missing, it was up to her to spot it and see to it that all the facts were procured. She got the Legion of Merit for the job she did.

While this writer was on duty with the staff that planned the invasion of southern France, he saw some of Miss Geise's thorough intelligence reports. They even included the addresses of the thirty-two brothels in Marseille and the names of their proprietors.

Back in New York City, Mrs. Emmy Rado had the key assignment of interviewing refugees arriving in this country from Occupied Europe and Africa. A pleasant, soft-spoken woman, she could extract the last morsel of information from a person without his realizing it. It was Mrs. Rado who came to the rescue when the United States Army was searching desperately for



I.N.P.

**MRS. WALLY CASTELBARCO**, daughter of Toscanini, carried vital messages through Nazi lines to the Italian underground—and once outsmarted the Gestapo.

data on the harbor at Bône, in Algeria. The Army was planning the November, 1942, landings in North Africa.

Mrs. Rado dug up a refugee who used to live in Bône.

"What's your profession?" she asked.

"Hydraulic engineer," he replied.

That was perfect, but there was an obstacle. Mrs. Rado couldn't let him know that the United States was interested in Bône. So she devised a neat camouflage.

"I'm writing a textbook on the economic life of Algeria," she said, "and I wonder if you'd help me."

Without his ever suspecting why, she gleaned from him the details on water depths, piers, pipe lines, harbor defenses, and everything else at Bône.

The Army has stated that the material she gathered was one of the biggest intelligence scoops of the war.

Many O.S.S. women infiltrated the German lines and worked shoulder-to-shoulder with anti-Nazi guerrillas.

"Artemis" was one. This thirty-seven-year-old American woman, whose real name is still a secret, was landed in Normandy by submarine, walked right across France to the Haute-Loire region, and made contact there with the French Resistance. There she organized three different bands of guerrillas, taught them demolition techniques, and personally led them during sabotage operations. On one occasion, she blew up a bridge all by herself while a German truck convoy was passing directly over it. A hundred Nazi soldiers were killed.

Another O.S.S. woman, Mrs. Wally Castelbarco, daughter of the famed conductor, Arturo Toscanini, lived, worked, and fought with an underground group. Her band of Italian partisans once shot it out with a German army unit at a range of seventy-five yards.

Mrs. Castelbarco's mission was to act as a courier between the Italian underground and O.S.S. headquarters in Switzerland. When the ultrasecret negotiations for the surrender of the German forces in Italy were in progress, she made her way on foot through the whole Nazi army in Italy, (Continued on page 133)

(Continued from page 53)

carrying vital messages from the partisans on the movements of the Wehrmacht troops. Nothing fazed her. Not even the Gestapo patrol that stopped her just before she reached the Swiss border.

"What's a woman like you doing on the streets alone at night?" the patrol leader demanded.

"My husband's drunk," she replied, "and I'm afraid to go home."

The Gestapo waved her on, and she got her messages through to Berne.

**W**HEN IT came to out-and-out espionage, O.S.S. women shone even more brightly.

There was "Lillian" (her code name), who danced in the Folies Bergère every night and dated German army officers. She picked up many nuggets of useful information on the operations of the Nazi military machine.

Out in the Orient, Rose de Saint-Phalle, a short, dark-eyed American girl who was born in China and spoke a half-dozen Chinese dialects, was on duty in Kunming. Whenever the O.S.S. wanted the inside dope on what was happening behind the scenes of the Chinese capital, it turned her loose.

Rose was the only American, O.S.S. officials say, to win the confidence of Wang Shao-lai, Number Two gunman of Shanghai and a ranking mogul of the Chinese underworld. He confided everything to her—from the daily activities of his seventeen wives and forty children to the latest news on which Chinese gangster was collaborating with the Japanese.

Incidentally, a black-satin dress with a low-cut neckline was not the prescribed uniform for American women spies. On the basis of the O.S.S.'s record, it can be said that the resourceful, adaptable woman who was a good listener and had the ability to inspire confidence in others was, as a rule, far more effective than any vamp.

Mrs. Louise Page Morris, who served with the O.S.S. in London, is cited by the O.S.S. as an example. They say she collected vast stores of information, not because she was a slinky siren, but because she was a fine hostess and a talented cook. Working over a decrepit two-burner gas stove in her minute Chelsea flat, Mrs. Morris concocted such tasty meals that practically everyone in London sought a bid to her dinner parties. Naturally, she made it a point to invite people who had information in which the O.S.S. was interested.

This is not to say that an attractive girl with bedroom eyes can't succeed as a spy. Or that sex isn't important to a woman in the intelligence game.

Take the case of the woman writer the O.S.S. sent to Madrid to learn the names of German spies operating in Allied countries under the guise of being Spanish consular officials. She had written several books, and some articles for prominent American magazines. Her "cover" was that she was seeking material for articles on living conditions in Spain.

The Gestapo was suspicious, but it made no difference. She arranged for interviews with prominent Spanish officials and, as an attractive woman with a sultry figure, had no trouble in striking up a friendship with an outstanding man in the Franco regime. For four months, she

dangled this Spaniard on a string and through him discovered the names of twenty-odd German spies working in England and the United States.

**M**RS. DOROTHY HUSTON, the best American undercover agent of them all, combined both glamour and resourcefulness in her work. The wife of a former official of the League of Nations, Mrs. Huston was a gifted actress, a splendid linguist, and a person of enormous versatility. Tall and slim, she appeared about thirty-five. To look at her, no one would have dreamed that she had three grandchildren.

It was she who cracked one of the most dangerous espionage rings in the United States.

One evening, late in 1944, a British secret-service man stationed at Croydon Airport near London saw someone slip a letter to a New York-bound passenger. He didn't know what was in the letter, but it had not gone through censorship, so he notified the O.S.S.

When the plane landed at LaGuardia Field in New York, an O.S.S. man picked out the passenger and trailed him to a brownstone house in the East Sixties.

It was then Mrs. Huston entered the scene.

"We want you to get a line on this guy," Frank Bielaski, the chief of counterintelligence for the O.S.S., told her. "Maybe he's harmless. Maybe he's not. Find out."

Through a few discreet inquiries in the neighborhood, Mrs. Huston learned that the airplane passenger was one of a trio of foreigners who lived in a small apartment on the third floor of that house in the Sixties. She also learned that there was a vacant apartment on the same floor and that the lower two floors were occupied by a private school for children.

She had a quiet talk with the principal of the private school. Within two hours, she'd been engaged as a French teacher and given a lease on the vacant apartment.

She didn't make a move to approach the foreigners. She didn't talk to them when she met them in the hall; she didn't even smile.

Her stratagem succeeded. Her aloofness disarmed them, and soon they were trying to approach her.

"As a new neighbor," one of them said to her, "we should get to know you."

She ignored him, but he persisted and finally Mrs. Huston condescended to say "Good evening."

Within ten days, she had them spilling secrets all over the place. They were Polish refugees and actively involved in espionage against the United States. Through agents whom they had scattered around the nation, they were harvesting military information and feeding it back to Germany via Argentina.

**A**FTER every other method had failed, Mrs. Huston loosened the tongue of Vice-Admiral Eugenio Minisini of the Italian Navy. In one of the trickiest operations of the war, an O.S.S. team headed by Commander John Shahean spirited Admiral Minisini out of Italy during the fall of 1943. The admiral was taken to the United States along with his wife, lodged in a big house in New York, and questioned about the reservoir of data he was known to have on the Nazi war plans. But he wouldn't talk. Every servant in the house was an O.S.S. operative, but the admiral was so close-

mouthed they couldn't learn a thing.

Eventually, "H-4"—Mrs. Huston's code number—was put on the job. She was introduced to Signora Minisini as a Miss Eileen Donnelly, because Minisini's mother had been Irish.

"Would you like me to show you around New York?" she asked the admiral's wife.

Mrs. Minisini was delighted to be guided around the town, and in no time the two women were bosom pals. Then Mrs. Huston went to work on the admiral. She'd learned from his wife that he was an Anglophobe so she promptly told him she hated the British. Before the month was up, she had drawn out of him much of the information the O.S.S. wanted.

Dorothy Huston will handle no more clandestine assignments, though. She chanced death a score of times and escaped unscathed. But two years ago she succumbed to cancer.

**W**HAT SORT of women made good intelligence agents?

At the outset, the O.S.S. enlisted a large number of rich society girls. It needed women in a hurry and only in wealthy circles could it readily find girls who had lived abroad and knew languages.

Insiders say many of these girls proved disappointing. They were more interested in the men they could meet and the parties they could attend than in parachuting into enemy-held countries. "Cocktail commandos," the men agents called them bitterly.

In general, the O.S.S. got far better results from women it recruited from college campuses, newspaper offices, and the ranks of the WAC. Thirty-seven of its best agents were missionaries' daughters.

How did the women compare with the men?

According to Colonel Otto Doering, the O.S.S.'s distinguished Executive Officer, "In the face of extreme danger, O.S.S. women showed courage and ability on a par with any man's."

O.S.S. women ran enormous risks. One girl, operating in German-occupied sections of Holland, was captured by the Nazis, beaten to a bleeding pulp, and raped by fourteen Gestapo men in a row. Months later, when the Allies liberated all of The Netherlands, this girl was located by an O.S.S. mission. She was virtually crippled, completely out of her mind, and pregnant. It required long years of care before she recovered her mental and physical health.

Another O.S.S. girl parachuted into France early in 1944 and for five months traveled up and down enemy-held Europe, contacting various underground groups. Dressed like a poor peasant girl, she carried guns, radios, and other equipment for the underground right in front of the Gestapo. Had anyone opened her old-fashioned straw suitcase, it would have meant torture for her.

Once a Gestapo agent did halt her. "What's in that valise?" he asked.

She giggled and answered, "I've got a load of guns in it."

The Nazi laughed and let her pass. She had three submachine guns in the valise at that moment.

**O**.S.S. EXPERIENCE refutes the charge that women cannot be trusted to keep a secret.

Colonel Russell Forgan, the handsome Wall Street banker who directed all

O.S.S. activities in Europe, says, "Most men think a woman is someone who shoots off her mouth and tells everything she knows at the first cocktail party, but the fact is that women are a helluva lot more security-conscious than men. The average man always has some woman he wants to impress."

"It never occurs to a woman to tell a man that she is a big shot in the communications center or that she is a secret agent. Her desire is to interest a man for herself alone, not for her job."

But the old cliché holds true: If a woman falls in love with the man upon whom she is spying, she can no longer be trusted. Women realize this themselves, as witness the O.S.S. woman who was assigned to "get next" to a German spy operating in London.

"Make him fall in love with you," she was ordered, "so he'll reveal his contacts."

Unluckily for the O.S.S., the German spy managed to make the American fall in love with him. The girl knew what was happening, though, and she didn't betray her country. Instead, she went to her chief and said, "My usefulness to you is over. Please send me home—soon."

The perfect situation, it seems, exists when women agents are in love with the officer "controlling" them. They'll do anything he asks them to do, and he doesn't have to worry about their becoming enamored of an enemy male.

Today the Central Intelligence Agency, which has assumed the O.S.S. functions, is very careful to choose only those women whom it considers emotionally stable. "It prefers married women, although it will use single women who have both feet on the ground. Women who are just getting over unhappy love affairs haven't a chance. They're too likely to fall in love with the wrong man on the rebound."

**T**HE PERSONNEL of the C.I.A. is top-secret, but it's known that it is using hundreds of American girls, here and abroad. Three out of ten persons in the C.I.A.'s essential Evaluation Branch, in Washington, D.C., are women, and collectively, they speak and read twenty-nine languages. Abroad, C.I.A. has scores of women at work. Some are active in the underground railroad that has been getting thousands of anti-Communists out of Czechoslovakia and other satellite nations. Several have been operating in the shadow of the Kremlin. Most have been doing as good a job as did their predecessors in the O.S.S.

The Politburo certainly thinks so. It recently issued an official pamphlet warning the officers of the Red Army to beware of the C.I.A. women who, the pamphlet said, often ply Russian officers with liquor to make them talk. "Sometimes," it continued, "they" (the C.I.A. women) "try to catch Russian officers by staging a skillful love story. . . . Anyone who displays weakness and gives in to temptation is not guaranteed that he will not be dragged into a quagmire of moral disintegration and political treason."

It is unlikely that the C.I.A. women employ such obvious methods as the Russians think. But our women in the intelligence field are certainly not passing up any chance to get us the information we must have to protect ourselves from another Pearl Harbor.

So, Russians, watch out! **THE END**